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ABSTRACT

If universities and colleges are to provide an optimal education for students from all cultures and backgrounds they should examine the relationships among their students. Since there has been an increase in black freshman enrollment at large universities from three percent in 1969 to four percent in 1970 and institutions are preparing students for life in a multi-cultural society, several questions may be posed: How will white students react? What are the attitudes of white students towards blacks? The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among racial attitudes, authoritarianism, and dogmatism in white university students. Form B of the Situational Attitude Scale and the D and F Scales were administered to 233 prospective freshmen about to enter the University of Maryland. Scores were intercorrelated to determine the relationship among student attitudes. Results indicated that whites holding negative attitudes toward blacks also tended to be more dogmatic and authoritarian than whites with more positive attitudes. Other studies done at Maryland have reported similar racial attitudes for freshmen and seniors. If an institution is committeed to preparing people to live and work in the larger society, providing for positive intercultural experiences on campus would seem to be a necessary and appropriate function. Required courses on race relations and support of student and faculty programs by the administration were suggested. (Author/JM)

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RACIAL ATTITUDES, AUTHORITARIANISM AND DOGMATISM AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

William E. Sedlacek and Glenwood C. Brooks, Jr.

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SUMMARY

As campuses become increasingly multiracial the attitudes of students toward one another become increasingly important. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among racial attitudes, authoritarianism and dogmatism in white university students. Form B of the Situational Attitude Scale (SAS) and the *D* and *F* scales were administered to 233 prospective freshmen about to enter the University of Maryland. Scores were intercorrelated to determine the relationship among student attitudes. Results indicated that whites holding negative attitudes toward blacks also tended to be more dogmatic and authoritarian than whites with more positive attitudes. Other studies done at Maryland have reported similar racial attitudes for freshmen and seniors. The writers conclude that if an institution is committed to preparing people to live and work in the larger society, providing for positive intercultural experiences on campus would seem to be a necessary and appropriate function. Required courses on race relations and support of student and faculty programs by the administration were suggested as vehicles of change.

If universities and colleges are to provide an optimal education for students from all cultures and backgrounds they should examine the relationships among their students. Often studies and discussions of student attitudes toward their school or their professors are conducted but rarely are student attitudes toward one another examined. Since there has been an increase in black freshman enrollment at large universities from 3% in 1969 (Sedlacek and Brooks, 1970a) to 4% in 1970 (Sedlacek, *et al.*, 1971a) and institutions are preparing students for life in a multi-cultural society, several questions may be posed: How will white students react? What are the attitudes of white students toward blacks?

The measurement of racial attitudes has been a difficult task for researchers (Shaw and Wright, 1967; Sedlacek and Brooks, 1970b). A particular problem in assessing the attitudes of whites toward blacks has been the social set or climate for being "tolerant" or "positive" toward blacks. This positive social set has been noted by several researchers (Sigall and Page, 1970; Sedlacek and Brooks, 1971). Evidence that there is a particularly strong positive set among university students was provided by Sedlacek and Brooks (1971b). They found that when white students were asked to indicate how most college students felt about people with a number of different values, they indicated that a racist and a bigot were rated most negatively. However, when the individual attitudes of white students were measured using the Situational Attitude Scale (SAS) it was found that they had negative attitudes toward blacks (Sedlacek and Brooks, 1970b). Thus there appears to be a discrepancy between what white students feel are socially acceptable attitudes toward blacks and how they actually feel themselves.

If white students have negative attitudes toward blacks, how do these attitudes relate to other attitudes such as authoritarianism and dogmatism? The purpose of this study was to explore this relationship in a sample of university students.

The relationship of dogmatism and authoritarianism to white attitudes toward blacks has not been fully studied. Most researchers in this area have examined the general concept of prejudice rather than correlates of white attitudes toward blacks. For example, several studies have found authoritarianism and prejudice to be positively correlated (Flowerman *et al.*, 1950; Campbell and McCandless, 1951; Goldstein, 1952; Siegman, 1961, 1962; Weitman, 1962). Adorno *et al.* (1950) developed the California *F* scale as a measure of general prejudice which is highly correlated with "Anti Negro" attitudes (as measured by the scales of Adorno *et al.*). The reader is referred to other sources for a more complete discussion of research on the *F* scale (Titus and Hollander, 1957; Christie and Cook, 1958; Buros, 1965).

Rokeach developed the Dogmatism (*D*) scale partly in criticism of the *F* scale as being limited to rightist authoritarianism while the *D* scale measures general authoritarianism. This contention has been generally supported in a number of studies (e.g., Kerlinger and Rokeach, 1966; Hanson, 1968; Warr *et al.*, 1969). Vacchiano *et al.* (1969) have summarized much of the work done on the *D* scale.

Method

Form B of the SAS (Sedlacek and Brooks, 1970b), the *D*, and the *F* scales were administered to 233 prospective University of Maryland students attending a summer orientation program on a date selected at random. The final usable *N* was 224 after eliminating black students and those not completing 90% of the items on each of the three scales from the sample. The *D* and *F* scales were combined into a single questionnaire given the innocuous title of Opinion Questionnaire. Responses to all instruments were on a 5 point scale (SAS: bipolar semantic differential scales; and *D* and *F*: Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree). Scores on the three instruments were intercorrelated and

tested for significance at the .05 level. Because of the demonstrated relative independence of the SAS situations and their stability over different samples, situation means were computed for each subject (*S*). The Appendix shows the polarity and resulting reflection given to each item in computing situation means. SAS situations and total score were intercorrelated with the *D* and *F* scales and tested for significance at the .05 level.

Results

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations and Table 2 the intercorrelations of the SAS, *D* and *F* scales.

Generally the SAS appears to have a significant but relatively low correlation with both *D* and *F*. The SAS appears slightly higher correlated with *F* than *D*. For example the SAS Total score correlates .36 with *D* and .44 with *F*, and the median correlation of SAS situations with *D* is .16 and with *F* is .22. Additionally the median intercorrelation of SAS situations is .26 and the correlation of *D* and *F* is .67.

Discussion

Thus attitudes of white students toward blacks are related to dogmatism and authoritarianism. While the relationship is not high it does merit discussion here and further exploration in other studies. For instance, SAS situations I (new neighbor), V (friend engaged), and IX (student demonstration) had the highest correlations with *D* and *F*. Previous research (Sedlacek and Brooks, 1970b, 1971b; Brooks and Sedlacek, 1970) has found that situations I and V generate the strongest negative reaction to blacks. Perhaps such situations generate feelings more closely related to authoritarianism or dogmatism. Supporting this hypothesis is the low correlation of situation VI with *D* and *F*. Situations III and VI are

the only two that actually result in whites reacting more favorably to a black in the situation than if race were not mentioned. Studies are underway exploring the reasons for this finding. The best explanation at present seems to be that the two situations involve service roles, and the concept of whites viewing blacks as appropriately filling such roles is a well documented stereotype.

Even though an SAS Total score was presented it may not be a meaningful score. The situations are relatively independent, and since situations III and VI appear different than the others the nature of a Total score is not yet understood.

A legitimate question that can be raised is whether there is a methodological artifact that could account for the results rather than inferring a relationship among racial attitudes, dogmatism and authoritarianism. Sedlacek and Brooks (1970c) provided evidence that responses to the SAS are a function of the contextual situations employed and not of the particular paper and pencil measurement technique used. Additionally, support for this contention is supplied by administration of Form A of the SAS (same situations with no racial reference) and the *D* and *F* scales to 246 *S*s similar to those in the present study. Results indicate that Form A was generally unrelated to *D* and *F* (median situation r with *D* and *F* = -.10).

Thus, it appears that white students who have relatively negative attitudes toward blacks also tend to be more authoritarian and dogmatic than whites with more positive attitudes toward blacks. In summarizing the changes in college student attitudes, Feldman and Newcomb (1969) conclude that studies show seniors to be less authoritarian, dogmatic and prejudiced than freshmen. Thus college life may have some impact on such attitudes. Therefore one might say "well, students will change eventually so it's no big problem." But a big question is how much do they change and when? It may not only be important in the social growth of white students but it may be imperative to many blacks. For instance,

DiCesare, Sedlacek and Brooks (1972) found that blacks who left school were not as able to adjust to the racism they encountered as were those blacks who stayed in school. That possibility that some whites might change as seniors was likely little comfort to these students.

It may be that the white students have not changed as much as Feldman and Newcomb concluded. Sedlacek and Brooks (1970b, 1971b) have reported similar racial attitudes for freshmen and upperclassmen. Perhaps the set to appear more tolerant, apparently overcome in the SAS, is stronger in seniors. That is, seniors may be less apt to express their true feelings than freshmen. Also, Peabody (1966) has criticized the *D* and *F* scales for having an "agreement response bias" which is a response set to agree with all statements on the scales.

The role of those working with students in changing racial, authoritarian or dogmatic attitudes is difficult but perhaps not impossible. Amir (1969) concludes that contact between ethnic and racial groups can improve intergroup relations if it occurs under positive conditions. For instance, if black students are viewed as all in "special programs," which the evidence says they are not, (see Sedlacek *et al.*, 1971a) or having been admitted under "lower standards," then contact between blacks and whites is likely to be negative. Seminars, discussion groups, research and dissemination of positive information on racial minorities, financial and moral support of human relations, and student and faculty initiated interracial programs are but a few things an institution can do. The writers also feel that a required undergraduate course in intercultural relations could prove beneficial to students and show institutional commitment to an area of social concern.

In summary, if an institution is committed to preparing people to live and work in the larger society, providing for positive intercultural experiences on campus would seem to be a necessary and appropriate function.

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TABLE 1

Means* and Standard Deviations of SAS, *D* and *F* (*N*=224)

SCALE	MEAN	S.D.
SAS (Form B) Situation:**		
I. A new black family moves in next door to you.	2.60	.75
II. You read in the paper that a black man has raped a white woman.	1.34	.42
III. It is evening and a black man appears at your door saying he is selling magazines.	2.04	.63
IV. You are walking down the street alone and must pass a corner where a group of five young black men are loitering.	1.93	.30
V. Your best friend has just become engaged to a black person.	2.25	.75
VI. You are stopped for speeding by a black policeman.	2.72	.58
VII. A new black person joins your social group.	2.79	.62
VIII. You see a black youngster steal something in a dimestore.	1.93	.47
IX. Some black students on campus stage a demonstration.	1.84	.64
X. You get on a bus that has all black people aboard and you are the only person who has to stand.	2.25	.67
SAS (Form B) Total Score ***	2.17	.35
D Scale	1.77	.31
F Scale	1.80	.44

* Scale ranges: SAS, 0=negative attitudes to 4=positive attitudes. *D* and *F*, 1=high dogmatic or authoritarian and 5= low dogmatic or authoritarian.

** The SAS is copyrighted and available from the authors on request.

*** SAS Total Score is the mean of all 100 items appropriately reflected.

TABLE 2

Intercorrelations* Among the SAS (Form B), *D* and *F*

	SAS Situation											
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Total	*D*	*F*
SAS Situation												
I		.29	.41	.13	.60	.23	.61	.32	.41	.33	.79	.29	.36
II			.26	.08	.24	-.09	.12	.06	.25	.11	.37	.08	.23
III				.26	.31	.14	.29	.14	.29	.39	.61	.14	.20
IV					.15	.11	.15	.02	.12	.25	.33	.10	.08
V						.11	.53	.43	.51	.30	.76	.36	.48
VI							.37	.03	.11	.28	.40	.10	.03
VII								.42	.35	.36	.73	.16	.20
VIII									.26	.20	.49	.26	.19
IX										.34	.64	.26	.41
X											.61	.16	.27
SAS Total												.36	.44
D													.67
F													

* All correlations larger than ±.13 are significant at .05

APPENDIX

SAS (Form B) Situations, Semantic Differential Scales and Item Polarities

ITEM NO.	ITEM* POLARITY	BIPOLAR WORD SCALES	SITUATION
1	-	good-bad	I. A new black family moves in next door to you.
2	-	safe-unsafe	
3	+	angry-not angry	
4	-	friendly-unfriendly	
5	-	sympathetic-not sympathetic	
6	+	nervous-calm	
7	-	happy-sad	
8	+	objectionable-acceptable	
9	-	desirable-undesirable	
10	+	suspicious-trusting	
11	-	affection-disgust	II. You read in the paper that a black man has raped a white woman.
12	-	relish-repulsion	
13	-	happy-sad	
14	-	friendly-hostile	
15	-	uninvolved-involved	
16	+	hope-hopelessness	
17	-	aloof-outraged	
18	-	injure-kill	
19	-	safe-fearful	
20	-	empathetic-can't understand	
21	-	relaxed-startled	III. It is evening and a black man appears at your door saying he is selling magazines.
22	-	receptive-cautious	
23	-	excited-unexcited	
24	-	glad-angered	
25	-	pleased-annoyed	
26	-	indifferent-suspicious	
27	-	tolerable-intolerable	
28	+	afraid-secure	
29	-	friend-enemy	
30	+	unprotected-protected	
31	-	relaxed-tensed	IV. You are walking down the street alone and must pass a corner where a group of five young black men are loitering.
32	-	pleased-angered	
33	-	superior-inferior	
34	-	smarter-dumber	
35	-	whiter-blacker	
36	+	aggressive-passive	
37	-	safe-unsafe	
38	-	friendly-unfriendly	
39	+	excited-unexcited	
40	+	trivial-important	

* SAS is scored so a high score = positive racial attitude, weights are based on factor loadings in Sedlacek and Brooks (1969).

APPENDIX

SAS (Form B) Situations, Semantic Differential Scales and Item Polarities (Continued)

ITEM NO.	ITEM* POLARITY	BIPOLAR WORD SCALES	SITUATION
41	-	aggressive-passive	V. Your best friend has just become engaged to a black person.
42	-	happy-sad	
43	-	tolerable-intolerable	
44	-	complimented-insulted	
45	+	angered-overjoyed	
46	-	secure-fearful	
47	-	hopeful-hopeless	
48	-	excited-unexcited	
49	-	right-wrong	
50	+	disgusting-pleasing	
51	-	calm-nervous	VI. You are stopped for speeding by a black policeman.
52	-	trusting-suspicious	
53	+	afraid-safe	
54	-	friendly-unfriendly	
55	-	tolerant-intolerant	
56	+	bitter-pleasant	
57	-	cooperative-uncooperative	
58	-	acceptive-belligerent	
59	+	inferior-superior	
60	+	smarter-dumber	
61	-	warm-cold	VII. A new black person joins your social group.
62	+	sad-happy	
63	-	superior-inferior	
64	+	threatened-neutral	
65	-	pleased-displeased	
66	-	understanding-indifferent	
67	+	suspicious-trusting	
68	+	disappointed-elated	
69	-	favorable-unfavorable	
70	+	uncomfortable-comfortable	
71	-	surprising-not surprising	VIII. You see a black youngster steal something in a dimestore.
72	+	sad-happy	
73	+	disinterested-interested	
74	-	close-distant	
75	+	understandable-baffling	
76	-	responsible-not responsible	
77	-	concerned-unconcerned	
78	-	sympathy-indifference	
79	+	expected-unexpected	
80	-	hopeful-hopeless	

* SAS is scored so a high score = positive racial attitude, weights are based on factor loadings in Sedlacek and Brooks (1969).

APPENDIX

SAS (Form B) Situations, Semantic Differential Scales and Item Polarities
(Continued)

ITEM NO.	ITEM* POLARITY	BIPOLAR WORD SCALES	SITUATION
81	+	bad-good	IX. Some black students on campus stage a demonstration.
82	-	understanding-indifferent	
83	+	suspicious-trusting	
84	-	safe-unsafe	
85	+	disturbed-undisturbed	
86	-	justified-unjustified	
87	+	tense-calm	
88	+	hate-love	
89	+	wrong-right	
90	-	humorous-serious	
91	+	fearful-secure	X. You get on a bus that has all black people aboard and you are the only person who has to stand.
92	-	tolerable-intolerable	
93	+	hostile-indifferent	
94	+	important-trivial	
95	+	conspicuous-inconspicuous	
96	-	calm-anxious	
97	+	indignant-understanding	
98	-	comfortable-uncomfortable	
99	+	hate-love	
100	-	not resentful-resentful	

* SAS is scored so a high score = positive racial attitude, weights are based on factor loadings in Sedlacek and Brooks (1969).